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**From:** Martin, John  
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**Subject:** PFOA/PFOS Clips

## **Cambridge, White Creek Residents Find PFOA Contamination in Wells**

The Post-Star (Glens Falls)

By: Michael Goot

August 10, 2016

**WHITE CREEK** — State environmental officials are investigating the source of PFOA contamination found in wells in White Creek near the Hoosic River.

The state Department of Health has found concentrations of the chemical at levels above the Environmental Protection Agency's advisory limit of 70 parts per trillion in 27 of the 126 well samples in southern Washington County, according to information provided by state health and environmental officials.

PFOA was not found in 32 of the samples and results for 13 are pending.

Perfluorooctanoic acid, a chemical that was used in nonstick coatings or commonly known as Teflon until its phase-out in the early 2000s, has been found in water supplies for residents of Hoosick Falls and Petersburg in Rensselaer County as well as in North Bennington, Vermont.

Prolonged exposure to the chemical could result in risk of cancer, birth defects, or problems with the liver, immune system, and thyroid, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

The state in May reached a settlement with the Saint-Gobain and Honeywell companies to clean up the contamination found in the Hoosick Falls area and pay for the cost.

As a result of its Hoosick Falls investigation, state officials have been testing wells in southern Washington County since April, according to Rob Swider, environmental health director for the state Department of Health's Capital Area Environmental Health Program.

"Working our way north, we noticed that wells were showing contamination going into Washington County, so we expanded that investigation along the Hoosic River, following areas where we were still detecting contamination in private wells," he said.

The state DEC has installed 26 filtration systems, known as point-of-entry-treatment systems, in White Creek and two in Cambridge to remove PFOA from the affected wells.

The treatment system includes a pre-filter that takes out sediment; then the water is sent through a granular-activated carbon filter to remove the PFOA, according to Mike Ryan of the DEC's Division of Environmental Remediation. Ultraviolet light destroys any bacteria.

Until the filtration systems are installed, residents can obtain free bottled water at Tops in Hoosick Falls.

State officials do not know the source of the contamination but are continuing to investigate, according to Ryan.

"In addition to the known plant sites, we've had a number of reports of illegal disposal sites in and around the town of Hoosick," he said.

DEC offers to install free point of entry systems on drinking water wells in impacted areas in Washington County. Residents interested in well testing and installation of the systems should call the state's Water Quality Hotline at 1-800-801-8092.

State officials prioritize the well sampling in southern Washington County based on location,

according to the Health Department's Charlotte Bethoney. "We're working out from the area closest to the Hoosic River," she said.

Officials are also going door to door to see if residents want their water sampled.

White Creek Supervisor Robert Shay said among the areas that have had positive tests in wells are along River and Turnpike roads. He does not know the source of the contamination.

"No one seems to have an idea why because we don't have any of those types of plastic manufacturing plant around us," he said.

Among the causes that have been speculated are air pollution, acid rain, runoff from chemicals used in agricultural fields and perhaps from the Hoosic River, according to Shay.

"We've had a major flood down there in that end of Eagle Bridge a few years ago, where the Hoosic River flooded into just about every home on that road," he said.

Peter Brown of 26 Center Road, which is off River Road, had a reading of 658 parts per trillion in his well. The Department of Health put in a filtration system, which he said is working fine.

Brown said he has been trying to fix up his house so he can leave it to his son one day. But the PFOA contamination is looming large.

"This is my son's inheritance. Is it going to be a ghost town?" he said.

Brown has Lyme disease and other health issues, but he does not think they are connected to PFOA. He is a smoker and also has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

White Creek resident Dean LeBarron, who lives at 53 River Road, near the border between Washington and Rensselaer counties, said there were 100 parts per trillion of PFOA in his well water.

His immediate neighbors did not test positive for PFOA, but another resident farther down the street did. LeBarron said he is not sure why positive results are showing up on some properties and not others.

Anne Walton of 320 River Road had a reading of 248 parts per trillion in her well.

“I was surprised. We’ve been drinking it for 10 years,” she said.

She is not sure whether she can attribute any health effects to the water. She is at risk for osteoporosis. She also worked in Hoosick Falls for a time at a diner. Her husband does not go to the doctor, but complains of not feeling well.

She said local industry should have not have been using and dumping chemicals.

“They should have warned us years ago when they knew about it,” she said.

### **Montclair Purchases PFOA Removal Unit for Trial**

NorthJersey.com/The Montclair Times

By: Nicholas Katzban

August 11, 2016

A trial run to test the efficacy of a carbon absorption system to remove perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) from the township's drinking water will commence, but the exact date depends.

According to Montclair Water Bureau Director Gary Obszarny, concrete has been poured for the site at the Glenfield Water Well, but he still has to wait for the arrival of the carbon absorption towers, as well as a crane to install them.

"It should be within the next two weeks," said Obszarny.

The system uses carbon to absorb PFOA. When the carbon is removed during filtration, so is the chemical.

The most recent test revealed PFOA presence at 43 parts per trillion in Montclair's drinking water, but previous results showed 48 ppt.

While the state Department of Environmental Protection has its guidance levels set at 40 ppt, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has a guidance level of 70 ppt, and as Obszarny noted, a "guidance level" is just that.

"There is no maximum contamination level. So, we're not even sure we have to treat it," he said, regarding language that would stipulate an official level of danger for PFOA presence. He noted that New Jersey is not required to have the same guidance as federal levels, but that its number can only ever be the same or lower than the EPA's, never higher.

He said that there is no harm in over-treating the water, and that the carbon system may remove other volatile organic compounds that the township is not aware of, or concerned about now, but could become an issue down the road.

"We're being proactive about it," Obszarny said.

Of course, that proactive spirit comes at a price.

The cost of installing the system at the Glenfield Well is about \$270,000, and total costs will likely come to approximately \$300,000, but that does not take the added cost of sampling the water into account, which Obszarny couldn't estimate.

The vendor for the system is Calgon Carbon, the lone company to offer a bid to the township. Obszarny affirmed that there is no alternative system available, as carbon absorption is the only proven method for removing PFOA.

"I talked to the State of New Jersey, other water companies, and everyone said everything out there points to carbon for this treatment," said Obszarny.

Vice president of the Calgon Municipal Business Unit, and a member of its perfluorinated compounds task force, Nora Stockhausen, told The Montclair Times that a reverse osmosis method is being researched for the removal of PFCs, but that the energy-intensive process is costly, and that it creates a higher concentration of PFOA waste.

With Montclair's PFOA level well below federal guidance, the objective is to bring that number down to a "non-detect level," at which its presence would not be observable by any known test, although that may not mean the compounds are gone completely, but at such a low parts per trillion, they are sure to be benign.

Despite experts and industry expectations of the system's efficacy, a trial run is still necessary.

"The public may think, 'what's the big problem, just add a filter.' It's not anyway near that simple," said Township Sustainability Officer Gray Russell. "The filter might take out other things that protect us as well."

Stockhausen said that the carbon could remove some chlorine along with the PFOA, but suggested that the change should be negligible.

Obszarny said he'll be monitoring the trial closely, testing samples for three months. Once those tests show a non-detectable level, he'll install a second system, most likely at the Lorraine Avenue Well.

"I know we bought the right system, but test results are what we are looking for," he said, then added, "I never would have recommended it, and the state never would have approved it, if it wasn't proven technology."

## **Schumer Visits PFOS-Contaminated Lake In Newburgh**

WAMC Northeast Public Radio

By: Allison Dunne

August 10, 2016

U.S. Senator Charles Schumer says he will introduce legislation that would require the Air Force to identify the source of water contamination in Newburgh and pay to clean it up if a base nearby is responsible.

Senator Schumer on Tuesday visited Washington Lake, the main source of drinking water for Newburgh that is contaminated with PFOS. The city is now drawing water from the Catskill Aqueduct while a carbon filtration system is designed, all being funded by the state. New York's senior senator says he will introduce legislation requiring the U.S. Air Force to pay for the cleanup if, in fact, Stewart Air National Guard base is found responsible for the contamination.

“So the Air Force needs to immediately conduct tests so we can determine the extent of the contamination and, if found culpable, pay for the mitigation as well as the release of a detailed timeline for cleaning it up,” Schumer says. “The people of Newburgh need answers and then they need action, fast. The City of Newburgh and its residents deserve clean drinking water. They deserve to know their children are safe. And they deserve to see those responsible pay for the cleanup, not the taxpayers of Newburgh.”

An Air Force spokesperson did not respond to a request for comment in time for this broadcast. Schumer says the bottom line is:

“It’s going to require the Air Force to get up from sitting on their hands and do the right thing for the City of Newburgh. I’m going to work to get this bill passed as soon as I can,” Schumer says. “As you all know, I’ve been calling for Congress to come back from vacation because of the Zika situation. If they come back they should do this as well, If they don’t come back, we have to pass a budget in September and I’m going to do everything I can to get this legislation in the bill in September so it will be law by the time the president signs it October 1, which is when we have to have a new budget.”

The Democrat says that before the Senate adjourned for summer recess, he introduced an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that required the Department of Defense to launch an investigation to determine the extent of possible groundwater contamination in Newburgh. However, Schumer’s amendment was not included and, as a result, he will be introducing this stand-alone bill. Newburgh City Manager Michael Ciaravino says by requiring additional testing, Schumer’s legislation could help identify other contaminants.

“We have another opportunity to do more comprehensive testing. As this lake now remains unused, a lot of questions have come forward about what other contaminants may have been utilized at Stewart Air Force that are now in the water, in Washington Lake, that is now in our water beds in Washington Lake,” Ciaravino says. “Before we’re able to switch back to Washington Lake as our primary source of water, we need to have those questions answered and I believe Senator Schumer’s legislation is going to move the City of Newburgh in the right direction, namely reconciling with the truth and the historic uses that have been brought into our water supply.”

Republican Orange County Executive Steve Neuhaus also was on hand.



“Our Department of Health has been front and center to make sure that the testing is done right and that we have all the tools to help you,” Neuhaus said. “I couldn’t be happier to be here supporting this, taking action, doing the right thing.”

The New York state Department of Environmental Conservation continues to investigate sources of contamination, and DEC Region 3 Director Martin Brand recently told WAMC the agency is closer to homing in on where to focus a full remedial investigation study after having sampled more than 100 locations.

“All of this is still strongly pointing to the primary source as being the Air National Guard base and some areas on the airport,” Brand says.

The DEC also has been investigating historic use and storage of PFOS-containing firefighting foam in the areas around Washington Lake and its tributaries. Ciaravino says Schumer’s visit to the lake, which is also a recreation area, meant a lot.

“Senator Schumer’s presence at Washington Lake means everything to us. My engineering team, our water department, our Department of Public Works, they’re exhausted,” Ciaravino says. “And it’s nice to know our efforts are not being ignored and that others take this issue with Washington Lake as seriously as we do.”

City of Newburgh resident Tamie Hollins says her son died at age 18 in 2010, and she was told he died of natural causes, after having felt sick for a few days.

“After hearing about the PFOS and the PFOAs in our tap water, in our bathing water, just in our water in our general, now I’m starting to think was that a contribute to my son passing away, but not just my son. There’s been two or three, maybe four, young people who passed away right after my son,” Hollins says. “And so now I’m going to go and look into it. I’m going to look further and do a little more research.”

The Environmental Protection Agency says studies have linked PFOS with potential health risks such as birth defects and damage to the liver and thyroid

## **Legislation Would Require Air Force to Clean Up Newburgh's Water if Stewart Guard Base is Proven to be Cause**

Mid-Hudson News.com

August 10, 2016

The city's main water supply, Washington Lake, is less than a half mile from the guard base

NEW WINDSOR – US Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) visited the site of Newburgh's contaminated Washington Lake, Tuesday afternoon, to announce new legislation that would require the Air Force to pay for the clean-up, if found responsible.

The cancer-causing chemical PFOS has been found in the water leading to the city shutting it down and tapping the New York City aqueduct.

According to Newburgh City Manager Michael Ciaravino, there is no proof that the Air National Guard Base at Stewart Airport is directly responsible for the contamination; however, DEC tests have shown that a primary source of contamination, measuring 5,900 parts per trillion for PFOS, is coming directly from Stewart.

Schumer said his proposed legislation would focus on three key points.

“First, a thorough inspection, as to what’s happened, then how to clean it up, and third, if the Air Force is culpable, they pay for it. All three would be required in the legislation,” said Schumer. “The Air Force is a big organization, but when people’s health is at stake, and it looks like the Air Force’s fault, they’ve got to ‘hop to’.”

Orange County Executive Steven Neuhaus said he thinks Schumer's proposal is a great idea. He will be backing him up with a resolution at the county level that already has backing.

Ciaravino said in addition to the city already incurring huge expenses as a result of the contamination, they are going to have to immediately prepare to pay for diesel pumps to pump out the lake before the rainy season. Meteorologists working with the city on the crisis have predicted a volatile hurricane season, which increases the chances for spill-over of the lake that could put neighboring municipalities at risk. These costs, and other's resulting from the contamination, make the funding that would result from Schumer's bill imperative, according to Ciaravino.

"We want some declaration so that all the emergency related expenses can be reimbursed as we incur them and there are a tremendous amount of expenses; roughly, it's over \$350,000, and that includes the estimates for the diesel pumps," said Ciaravino. "Our fire department has made it patently clear that we cannot risk a spill-over from Washington Lake downstream to our neighbors in the Town of New Windsor and the Town of Newburgh, and we agree."

There is no specific timeline for when the legislation could make it through both houses, but Schumer said they are aiming to have it passed through the House and Senate by October 1, 2016

**Legislation Introduced to Have Air Force Pay for PFOS Cleanup of Newburgh's Water: Testing, Cleanup, and Confirmation of Clean Water in Washington Lake Required by Proposed Law**

Epoch Times

By: Yvonne Marcotte

August 10, 2016

NEWBURGH—Sen. Charles Schumer toured the tainted Washington Lake area on Aug. 9 and announced legislation to require the Air Force to pay for a water contamination cleanup if found responsible.

As a PFOS-contaminated water crisis continues to plague Newburgh, the legislation would require the Air Force to immediately conduct tests to determine the extent of possible ground water contamination in and around the City of Newburgh.

If found culpable, the Air Force would pay for the cleanup and release an expedited timeline to mitigate the contamination. The legislation would ensure that critical water supplies for Newburgh are clean and pure.

He was joined by County Executive Steven Neuhaus and Michael Ciaravino, city manager of the City of Newburgh. The perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) contamination is believed to have originated at Stewart Air National Guard base. PFOS has been used in fire-fighting sprays at airports. It is believed to cause a number of health problems, including cancer.

#### Air Force to Foot Bill

The legislation to be introduced would require three actions from the Air Force. The military would conduct tests to determine the extent of ground water contamination, would foot the bill for cleanup if found responsible, and would produce an expedited timeline to ensure the water supply is free of contamination.

Referring to fire extinguishers that use foam without PFOS, Neuhaus said that the Air Force, “if they haven’t already, are probably doing as much as they can to switch over.”

“Washington Lake is a core asset of our community and it is important to fix our primary source of drinking water,” Ciaravino said.

Schumer referred to a map of the lake and surrounding area that has been the principal water supply for the city.

“City of Newburgh homeowners and residents need answers and action from the Air Force regarding this PFOS contamination—and they need it fast,” Schumer said.

“Signs clearly point to the operations at the Stewart Air National Guard Base as the source of this pollution,” he said, “so the Air Force needs to immediately conduct tests to determine the extent of this contamination.”

Schumer said if Congress passes the legislation by Oct. 1, the Air Force should finish their inspection by the first of the new year.

Recent reports of environmental tests revealed elevated levels of PFOS in ponds near Stewart Air National Guard Base. Schumer said these ponds near the base eventually drain into Washington Lake.

Only crystal-clear water and crystal-clear answers will do.

— Sen. Charles Schumer on PFOS contamination in Newburgh's water supply

Before the U.S. Senate went into summer recess, Schumer introduced an amendment, which was not accepted, to the National Defense Authorization Act to require the Department of Defense to investigate the extent of ground water contamination in Newburgh.

Last month the senator wrote to Lt. Gen. L. Scott Rice, director of the Air National Guard, to set up a timeline to identify and clean up all PFOS pollution. “Only crystal-clear water and crystal-clear answers will do,” Schumer said.

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